

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 /072 W

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R 271456Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8149

INFO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

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CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, NI, LI, SF

SUBJECT: FMG REMAINS HOSTILE TO "DIALOGUE"

REF: LAGOS 1618

SUMMARY: LARGELY IN REACTION TO TOLBERT-VORSTER MEETING.  
FMG HAS REITERATED ITS FUNDAMENTAL OPPOSITION TO "DIALOGUE"  
WITH SOUTH AFRICA. END SUMMARY

1. IN THREE RECENT PUBLIC STATEMENTS, FMG HAS MADE CLEAR  
IT REMAINS FUNDAMENTALLY OPPOSED TO "DIALOGUE" WITH SOUTH  
AFRICA.

2. FIRST STATEMENT WAS PROMPTED BY TOLBERT-VORSTER MEETING  
IN MONROVIA. ON RETURN FROM TRIP TO MAIDUGURI, GOWON  
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WAS ASKED AT AIRPORT FEBRUARY 24 WHETHER VORSTER WOULD BE

WELCOMED IN NIGERIA BY FMG. GOWON REPLIED THAT QUESTION WAS IRRELEVANT AS IT WAS UNLIKELY THAT SOUTH AFRICAN PRIME MINISTER WOULD WANT TO VISIT NIGERIA CONSIDERING "OUR VERY STRONG ANTI-APARTHEID POLICY." GOWON FURTHER OBSERVED, HOWEVER, THAT IF BY SOME CHANCE "WE WERE TO WAKE UP ONE MORNING TO LEARN VORSTER HAS ARRIVED UNEXPECTEDLY AT THE IKEJA AIRPORT, NIGERIANS WOULD PROVE TO HIM THAT THEY ARE A COURTEOUS PEOPLE BY TREATING HIM AS A HUMAN BEING IRRESPECTIVE OF HIS COLOR, CREED, OR IDEOLOGY."

3. IN PRESS INTERVIEW UPON HIS RETURN FEBRUARY 25 FROM OAU CM MEETING, ARIKPO WARNED ALL INDEPENDENT AFRICAN NATIONS TO BEWARE OF VORSTER AND NOT TO BE WOODED BY "PRETENTIONS MANEUVERINGS." ARIKPO SAID, HOWEVER, THAT NIGERIA DID NOT BELIEVE RESOLUTION OF SOUTH AFRICAN PROBLEMS SHOULD ENTAIL MILITARY CONFRONTATION. THEY SHOULD BE DEALT WITH, HE SAID, BY "THE LOGIC OF THE CURRENT SITUATION WHICH WOULD FORCE THE RACIST REGIME TO CHANGE ITS POLICIES." HE CONCLUDED THAT IT WOULD BE IN BEST INTERESTS OF SOUTH AFRICA, BOTH ECONOMICALLY AND DIPLOMATICALLY, TO CONCEDE LEADERSHIP OF THE AREA TO THE BLACK MAJORITY.

4. FINAL STATEMENT IN SERIES WAS ISSUED FEBRUARY 26 BY MEA IN RESPONSE TO SOUTH AFRICAN NEWS REPORTS OF IMPENDING SOUTH AFRICAN PARTICIPATION IN INTERNATIONAL PRESS INSTITUTIONAL CONFERENCE SCHEDULED FOR LAGOS LATER THIS YEAR. MEA DISMISSED STORY AS "FALSE AND MISCHIEVOUS SPECULATION" AND INSISTED THAT CONFERENCE INVOLVING SOUTH AFRICANS AND SELECTED BLACK JOURNALISTS WOULD NOT BE PERMITTED IN NIGERIA.

5. COMMENT: STATEMENTS BY GOWON AND ARIKPO OFFER CLEAR INDICATION FMG DID NOT WELCOME RECENT TALKS BETWEEN TOLBERT AND VORSTER, WHILE MEA STATEMENT DEMONSTRATES ONCE AGAIN THAT NIGERIANS REMAIN OPPOSED TO ENTIRE CONCEPT OF "DIALOGUE".

6. INTERESTINGLY, FMG HAD TO ISSUE CORRECTION TO ORIGINAL GOWON STATEMENT WHICH WAS WIDELY MISINTERPRETED BY PRESS. IN FIRST REPORT OF GOWON'S INTERVIEW, PRESS REPORTED CLEAR IMPLICATION BY GOWON THAT FMG WOULD WELCOME OPEN MEETING WITH VORSTER IF OCCASION AROSE. WHILE PRESS IS FREQUENTLY INACCURATE, FACT THEY ALL SEEM TO HAVE MADE SAME ERROR SUGGESTS GOWON'S OFF-THE-CUFF REMARKS WERE AMBIGUOUS AT BEST AND LEFT DOOR OPEN

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TO INTERPRETATION WHICH CLEARLY CAUSED SOME CONSTERNATION WHEN IT APPEARED IN PRINT.  
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## Message Attributes

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**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
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